(f) whether the proposed Bill would be passed during the current Monsoon Session; and

(g) if not, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF LABOUR (SHRI M. P. VEERENDRA KUMAR): (a) to (g) The issue of bringing up a Central Bill on Agricultural Workers has been under Govt.'s consideration for quite sometime mainly on account of varied perceptions of the State Govts arising out of different agro-climating and diverse socio-economic conditions prevailing in different parts of the country. A draft Bill on the subject drawn up by the Central Govt. was again discussed in the Conference of the State Labour Ministers' held on 07-08 July, 1997. The Conference could not reach any unanimous conclusion on the issue. Government's endeavour is to finalise the Bill and introduce it in the Parliament at the earliest.

Making of the Hepatitis-C Screening Mandatory

*240. SHRIMATI URMILABEN CHIMANBHAI PATEL: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government have issued notification making the Hepatitis-C screening mandatory from 1st of July, 1997;

(b) whether Government had adequate stock of kits for supplying to all the Central, State and other NGOs who are maintaining blood banks in the country before issue of the notification;

(c) if so, the details thereof and its distribution for ensuring the safety of the blood by these agencies, State-wise; and

(d) if not, what further steps Government propose to take in this direction?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF HEALTH AND FAMILY WELFARE (SHRIMATI RENUKA CHOWDHURY): (a) No, Sir.

(b) and (c) Do not arise.

(d) The possibility of inclusion of Hepatitis-C testing in blood requires an indepth deliberation among Blood Transfusion Officers, Technologists and Administrators to have a techno-economical analysis and to work out a timeframe before adopting this test as mandatory. Till that time the HCV testing will remain voluntary.

WRITTEN ANSWERS TO UNSTARRED QUESTIONS

Purchase of Critical Long-Delivery Equipments

1706. SHRI AMAR SINGH: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government had purchased critical long-delivery equipments, in advance, at a cost of Rs. 1366 crores for the plants for generating 10,000 MW of electricity by 2000 A.D.;

(b) whether it is a fact that Government had placed another order for material worth Rs. 950 crores for the same;

(c) if so, what is the total expenditure, so far, incurred in this behalf; and

(d) whether the proposal has since been abandoned and if so, the reasons therefor?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) and (b) Advance procurement of critical and long-delivery items of equipment and components for six 500 MWe Units and four 220 MWe units at a cost of Rs. 1511 crore was authorised by the Government as part of the proposal to install 10,000 MWe of nuclear power generating capacity by 2000 A.D. This was done to

enable completion of the project expeditiously by reducing the gestation period.

(c) An expenditure of Rs. 1651 crore including interest and escalation was incurred up to the end of March 1997 in this behalf.

(d) The programme has not been abandoned. But due to financial constraints the projects could not be taken up as originally envisaged. In view of this the advance procurement programme was reviewed and curtailed. It is proposed to take up immediately for construction of two 500 MWe Units at Tarapur. Efforts are also being made to short-close/cancel/defer orders already placed to the extent feasible for the projects not likely to be taken up during the IX Five Year Plan viz. Rajasthan Atomic Power Project-5 to 8 and Kaiga 5&6.

Uranium Ore Deposits in the Country

1707. SHRI BHAGABAN MAJHI: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether Uranium deposits are available in the country;

(b) if so, the details thereof, including the estimated value thereof, State-wise;

(c) the way in which these reserves are likely to be utilised and for how long; and

(d) the steps proposed to be taken by Government in future in this regard?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PERSONNEL, PUBLIC GRIEVANCES AND PENSIONS AND MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PARLIAMENTARY AFFAIRS (SHRI S. R. BALASUBRAMONIYAN): (a) and (b) Yes, Sir. Economically mineable deposits of Uranium (U308) are available at the following places:—

Name of the deposit	Ore in Million Tonnes	AV Grade (% U308)	U308 (Tonnes)
Jaduguda, Singhbhum District, Bihar	10.07	0.067	*6700
Bhatin, Singhbhum District, Bihar	2.25	0.051	*1150
Narwapahar, Singhbhum District, Bihar	25.01	0.044	*11000
Copper tailings from Copper mines at Singhbhum District, Bihar	9.75 (concentrate)	0.080	*7800
Mohuldih, Singhbhum District, Bihar	2.83	0.063	1700
Domiasiat, West Khasi Hills District, Meghalaya	9.22	0.104	9500
Lambapur, Nalgonda District, Andhra Pradesh	1.75	0.093	1700

*A Part of these reserves has been extracted over the years for requirement of fuel for the existing Nuclear Plants. Since Uranium is not a freely tradable commodity, its value cannot be determined correctly.